

# BLOOD and STEEL

*An Exposure of the 12-Hour Day  
in the Steel Industry*

By JAY LOVESTONE

Author of "The Government—Strikebreaker"



PRICE TEN CENTS

PUBLISHED BY

**WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA**

799 BROADWAY



NEW YORK CITY



Three Proletarian Writers Praise  
"THE GOVERNMENT—  
STRIKEBREAKER"

By JAY LOVESTONE

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## CHAPTER I.

### EXPOSE OF AMERICAN COOLIE SYSTEM OF LABOR SHOWS HOW 12-HOUR DAY DEGRADES WORKERS

In the production of steel American capitalism has shown its ugliest brutality. This industry epitomizes the depths of degradation to which workers can be forced under the rule of the employing class.

"The United States has the largest, richest and most conveniently located deposits of iron ore, copper, lead and zinc in the world, and coal for their reduction." Besides, "A comparison of English and American governmental statistics shows that the average American wage earner produces from two to three times more output in money value than the English wage-earner, and uses from two to three times more horse power."

According to a study of the three shift system in the production of steel made by the International Labor Office of the League of Nations the United States is the only great steel producing country in the world where the 12-Hour Working Day prevails. Not only Europe, but even Canada, South Africa, Japan and India run most of their steel mills on a three-shift basis. The great Tata mills in India have adopted the Eight-Hour Day. Only in China where there is little steel produced do we find the two-shift system.

And the sub-committee of the Federated American Engineering Societies, whom Harding called "our foremost organization of American industrial skill," after an intensive study has found that: "The principle of the 12-hour shift is a survival of the time when it was the custom to work men long hours, and when the mechanical side of the iron and steel industry was less perfectly developed, so that the periods of an enforced idleness of the mill and the men occurred much more frequently than at present."

In the diary of a furnace worker, Charles Rumafoed Walker, who was a First Lieutenant in the American Army, we find this condition vividly described.

#### Said a Scotch Melter to Walker:

"Now in the old country, a man can have a bit of fun. Picnics, a little singin' and drinkin', and the like. What can a man do here? We work eight hours in Scotland. They work eight hours in France, in Italy and Germany—all the steel mills work eight hours except in this bloody free country . . . I'll tell you there will come a time when Gary and all the other big fellers will have to work it themselves—no one else will."



### How Steel Trust Reduces Hours

As early as 1912 the stockholders of the Steel Corporation voted against the 12-Hour Day in principle. One of the principal demands of the strikers in 1919 was the abolition of the two-shift system. So great has been the demand for the introduction of an Eight-Hour Day in steel mills that even Czar Gary has repeatedly promised to look into the matter.

On May 18, 1922, President Harding wined and entertained 40 or 50 of the leading steel barons at a White House Dinner. It was at this royal dinner that Gary, the Chief Executive of the United States Steel Corporation yielded to Harding, the Chief Executive of the United States Government, and appointed a committee of the American Iron and Steel Institute to investigate the practicability of running the whole industry on a three-shift basis.

As many expected, this Committee found it impracticable to introduce the Eight-Hour Day at present. This Committee was simply pursuing the same tactics and manoeuvres as has Gary for over a decade.

Testifying before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, investigating the 1919 Steel Strike, Gary had the brazen effrontery to say that the Steel Corporation was "reducing these hours from year to year."

As a matter of fact the hours of labor in the steel industry have been increasing steadily. In 1910 the Blast Furnace men worked 78.7 hours per week and the Open Hearth Men 75.3 hours. In 1919 they worked 82.1 hours and 76.4 hours per week respectively on an average.

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics has found that in 57 of the 79 occupations of the steel industry the weekly hours of labor increased from a few minutes up to 14 hours in 1919 as compared to 1914.

### Show Great Extent of 12-Hour Day

In a report of the U. S. Department of Labor, published May 24, 1922, we are given the latest facts and figures about the extent to which the steel workers are enslaved 12 hours.

Less than 25 per cent of the steel workers are allowed to work under 60 hours a week "altho in most industries 60 hours was regarded as the maximum working week" over a decade ago. About half of those working 12 hours a day work seven days a week.

It has been pointed out in Bulletin No. 265, of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, that the per cent of men averaging 12 hours a day in the steel industry is over twice that of those in the chemical, nearly five times of those in the anthracite fields, eight times those in the rubber industry and almost 25 times those working 12 hours a day in the bituminous coal mines.

Even according to Gary's own testimony, before the Senate Committee, that 69,000 men are employed 12 hours a day, it would follow that the daily lives of over 350,000 men and women are affected by the 12-Hour Day. But Mr. Gary gave us a rather low estimate of 36 per cent of his employees working 12 hours a day. On the basis of a minimum of 50 per cent being subject to the 12-Hour Working Day, it would be far more accurate to say that over 500,000 men, women and children are suffering from all the iniquities and degradations inherent in this brutalizing working day.

### What 12-Hour Day Means to Worker

What is the 12-Hour Day really like? What does it mean to the worker?

In his diary as a furnace worker, Lieut. Walker gives us the following picture: "It's hot—temperature, 150 or 160 when you throw your shovelful in—and lively work for back and legs. Everybody douches his face and hands with water to cool off, and sits down for 20 minutes. Making back-wall has affinities with stoking; only it's hotter while it lasts. The day is made up of jobs like these—shovelling manganese at tap-time, 'making bottom,' bringing up mud and colomite in wheelbarrows for fixing the spout—hauling fallen bricks out of the furnace.

"And none of the spells, it should be noticed, are 'your own time'! You strain for 12 hours. Nerves and will are the Company's; the whole shift—whether the muscles in your hands and feet move or are still. And the existence of the long day makes possible unrelieved labor, hard and hot, the whole turn of 14 hours, if there is need for it."

Similar pictures are given in the diaries written by American Carnegie Steel Workers. We submit the following comments extracted from these diaries by the Inter-Church Commission:

"The Carnegie steel worker works 87 hours out of 168 hours in the week. Of the remaining 81 he sleeps seven hours per day; total 49 hours. He eats in another 14; walks or travels in the street car four hours; dresses, shaves, tends furnace, uncresses, etc., seven hours. His one reaction is—'What the Hell!'—the universal text accompanying the 12-hour day."

Job of the Third Helper: "The third helper fills large bags with coal to throw into the ladle at tap time; easy to burn your face off. Helps drill a 'bad' hole at tap time, work of the most exhausting kind, also must shovel dolomite into ladle of molten steel. This is the hottest job and certainly the most exposed to minor burns. Temperatures around 180 degrees, but it takes only four or five minutes. Nearly every tap-time leaves three or four burns on the neck, face, hands or legs. It is usually necessary to extinguish little fires in your clothing.



Altogether not so bad as heavier lifting parts of the furnace job which are more hateful, together with the monotonous exposures."

This is the way Gary translates his Christianity into every day lives of the workers. This is Gary's **GOLDEN RULE** for the Steel Workers.

### Many Casualties of the 12-Hour Day

Not all workers are able to stand Gary's **RULE OF GOLD AND RUIN**. Says the Federated American Engineering Societies report: "In some industry 12 hours work has been found too long for the men, and it was customary to have 'spell hands' to relieve them at intervals."

And Lieut. Walker further shows that: "Even the strongest of the Czecho-Slovaks, Serbs and Croates, who work in the American Steel Furnaces, cannot keep it up, (the 84 hour week) year, after year, without substantial physical injury."

Mr. Walker went on to say: "Another feature that impresses when you actually work under the system is the sleep you get is troubled, at best. You are compelled to go to bed one week by day, the next by night. By about Friday, I found my body getting itself adjusted to day sleep; but the change, of course, was due again Monday. The body will adjust itself to continued day-sleeping, I know: but apparently not to the weekly shifts, from day sleep to night sleep, customary in steel."

And in his address delivered May 17, 1912, at the annual banquet of the American Iron and Steel Institute, Dr. Thomas Darlington, then the secretary of the Welfare Committee of the Institute, said: "Taking the principal (steel) towns visited by the Institute excluding the large cities, the death rate averaged 19 per 1000—easily double of what it should be and at least one-third more than the rate of some cities of larger size." The death rate for the entire registration area was 14.1 per 1000.

For the same year B. S. Warren, Surgeon, and Edgar Sydensticker, of the U. S. Public Health Service, found the following death rates in typical steel towns: Johnstown, Pa., 16.9; Shenandoah, Pa., 18.9; McKee's Rocks, Pa., 16.9; Braddock, Pa., 23.2.

Their report, Public Health Bulletin No. 76, goes on to say that: "As it is generally recognized that mortality returns in localities of this type are more or less incomplete, it is safe to say that the rates cited are lower than more thorough and complete vital statistics would show."

In the year 1916-1917, while the U. S. Steel Corporation was making a net profit of \$888,931,511, the workers paid in killed and wounded 80,427.

For the period 1913-1919, the steel workers earned, in total un-

divided surplus alone, \$2,239,986,569.84 for Gary's corporation at the expense of 198,383 disabled, crippled and killed.

In the decade 1910-1919, according to Bulletin No. 298, of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the steel workers suffered the following casualties: Killed, 3,255; permanently disabled, 9,549; temporarily disabled, 412,837. Thus there were a total of 425,686 workers disabled, crippled and killed in ten years while piling up billions of dollars in dividends and undivided surpluses.

### The Overworked Suffer Most

It is especially interesting to note the correlation between the accident frequency rates and the length of working hours. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin No. 289 shows that 29 per cent of the blast furnace men, 17 per cent of the open hearth men and 12 per cent of those employed in the Bessemer Mills were working 84 hours per week in 1920. The number of accidents is directly dependent on the length of the working hours and the common laborers who suffer most from the 12-Hour Working Day are those who pay the highest price in physical injuries. This truth is thus forcefully brought home by Mr. Lucian W. Chaney who directed this investigation:

"Common labor occupies in these mills the same position in respect to frequency of accidents that has been noted before. The frequency rate is 220.5 cases per 1,000,000 hours' exposure as against 57.6 cases for miscellaneous occupations. This unfortunate preeminence of the common laborer is found in each of the cause groups in which it was possible to isolate such workers."

At the hearings of the Senate Committee, a worker put this situation in the following light:

THE CHAIRMAN: "What mill are you in?"

MR. COLSON: "The bloom mill at the steel works at Donora, Pa., and so far as safety conditions up there are concerned, a man has no chance, because if he ever slips, his hands are greasy, and there is no rail, and there is no chance for your life, unless you jump out of the window and kill your self."

### The 12-Hour Day Chains The Worker To Ignorance

The effect of fatigue on the intelligence of the worker is most detrimental. In "Fatigue and Efficiency" Josephine Goldmark quotes the following from the Report of the N. Y. State Factory Inspector:

"Long hours of hard manual labor destroy the mental appetite in almost every instance. The man is unfitted for reading or study—he is physically tired and his intellect is inactive. The drain upon his



vitality has been continuous and heavy, and he most needs sleep in order to recuperate. This continues indefinitely—each succeeding day being but a repetition of the former.”

And in his diary, Lieut. Walker showed:

“That the complaint was not so much that there wasn’t some bit of an evening before you, but that there was no untired time when you were good for anything—work or play. When you had sat about for perhaps an hour after supper, you recovered enough to crave recreation. A movie was the very peak to which you could stir yourself. There were men who went further. I know a young Croat in Pittsburgh who attended night school after the 12-Hour Day. But he is the only one of all the steel-workers I met who attempted such heroism. And he had to stop after a few weeks.”

Testifying before the Senate Committee, Father Kazinski very ably exposed the damaging effect of the two-shift system on the intellectual life of the worker. Said the Father:

“We have an Americanizing course project taking place, and they have been instructed to go and attend these night schools. They are not a very great success for the simple reason that the men are overworked, working from ten to thirteen hours a day; and they do not feel like going to the schools and depriving their families of their own company and society even after these hours, these long hours. Sunday—they have none, for most of them go off to work.”

Finally, the Inter-Church investigators, analyzing the report on workers’ education made by A. H. Wyman of the Carnegie Steel Company of Pittsburgh at the 1919 session of the National Association of Corporation Schools have shown that:

“Nearly fifty per cent of the startlingly small group of 341 enrolled out of the tens of thousands in the district dropped out for reasons connected with hours.”

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WHOLESALE MURDER OF CHILDREN

The ravages of the rapacious Steel Barons are not limited to the fathers and mothers. Profits take a terrific toll amongst the children of the steel workers. In the steel areas the infant mortality rate is appalling.

The noted surgeon, B. S. Warren, and government statistician, Sydenstricker, in Public Health Bulletin No. 76, have brought to light the following astounding situation:

“Mortality among the children is generally recognized as a very sensitive indicator of the health conditions of a community. The Federal Census Reports for the five years, 1909 to 1913, inclusive, showed that the deaths among children under five years of age averaged 27 per cent of all deaths in registration cities of the United States, and contrasted with considerably higher percentages for certain iron and steel manufacturing towns, where investigations have shown unhealthy conditions to exist and where low-paid wage-earners constitute a large part of the population. . . .

“Iron and Steel communities: Braddock, Pa., 51; Carnegie, Pa., 47; Homestead, Pa., 57; Johnstown, Pa., 40; Monessen, Pa., 67; South Bethlehem, Pa., 55; Steelton, Pa., 45; Loraine, Ohio, 45; Youngstown, Ohio, 39; Gary, Indiana, 48.

“Thus the percentage of all deaths of children under five years of age in these industrial communities during the period indicated was from 50 to 150 per cent above the average for all cities in the registration area.

“An even sharper contrast is shown when communities of this type are compared with residential communities composed largely of well-to-do families. For example, in Brookline, Mass., the deaths of children under 5 years of age for the period averaged 10 per cent of all deaths. In East Orange, N. J., the percentage was 17.1.”

It is especially interesting to note that in the thorough field study made by the Children’s Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor in Johnstown, Pa., the following condition was found to prevail according to Warren and Sydenstricker:

“In the distinctly unskilled workingmen’s wards were rates found to range from 156 to 271, while in the other wards the rates ranged from 50 to 125. . . .”

Let us now go to Gary where the investigations of Hughes made public in 1923 clinch our point that the greatest infant mortality rates are found amongst the families whose breadwinners are the worst under paid and most overworked. Bulletin No. 112 of the Children’s Bureau shows that: “Among the 392 live born infants in the lowest earning group (under \$1,050), 54 deaths under 1 year of age occurred, giving a mortality rate of 137.8; 90 out of the 708 babies in the mid-group (under \$1,050—1,850), died under 12 month of age, making an infant mortality rate of 127.1; of the 179 in the highest income (\$1,850 up) group 16 died in infancy, establishing a mortality rate of 89.4 for the group which was best favored financially. In these figures appears again the coincidence between low income and high infant mortality rate which has so persistently recurred in the studies made by the Children’s Bureau.”



### Steel Workers' Homes Ruined

In the report made public May 25, 1923, such profiteers in steel as Dinkey and Block and Gary and Grace said: "Whether or not, in the large majority of cases, twelve-hour men devote less time to their families than the employees working less hours is perhaps questionable."

It may be put down as a copy-book axiom that in the Barony of Steel starvation wages and unspeakable working hours are inseparable. Ruined homes, overworked mothers, wretched, unsanitary living conditions, a miserable, monotonous machine existence and mass murder of their children—these are the blessings visited on workers by Garyism and its Twelve-Hour Hell Shift System.

Said Lieutenant Charles Rumford Walker in describing his life as a furnace worker:

"The community of workers takes on a special character, where men live whose day is twelve-hours long. 'We haven't any Sundays,' the men said; and 'There isn't time enough at home.' This is the most far-reaching effect of 'hours' in steel, I think, and easily transcends the others.

"What do you do when you leave the mill?" people ask. 'On my night week,' I answer, 'wash up, go home eat, and go to bed.' Anything that happens in your home or city that week is blotted out, as if it occurred upon a different continent; for every hour of the twenty-four is accountable, in sleep, work, or food, for seven days; unless a man prefers, as he often does, to cheat his sleeptime and have his shoes tapped or take a drink with a friend."

"The Twelve-Hour Day, I believe, tends to discourage a man from marrying and settling into a regular home life. Men complained that they didn't see their wives, or get to know their children, since the schedule of hours shrunk matters at home to food, sleep, and the necessities. 'My wife is always after me to leave this game,' Jock used to say, the first helper on Seven. Mathematically, it figures something like this: twelve hours work, an hour going to and from the mill, an hour for eating, eight hours of sleep—which leaves two hours for all the rest, shaving, mowing the lawn, and the 'civilizing influence of children.'

"I have no brief to offer for the Eight-Hour Day as a general panacea for evils in industry. I merely bear witness to the fact that the Twelve-Hour Day, as I observed it, tended either to destroy, or to make unreasonably difficult that normal recreating and participation in the doings of the family group, the church or the community, which we ordinarily suppose is reasonable and part of the American inheritance."

### Family Life Is Destroyed

In their campaign of vile calumny against the militants in the labor movement, the champions of the interests of the steel and other capitalist magnates have posed as the heavenly anointed defenders of the "hearth and home." The unbridled hypocrisy of these apostles of the profit system is brought into bold relief by the following example of the wretched family life amongst the steel workers as found by the Inter-church World Movement investigators:

"None can dispute the demoralizing life of the inhuman Twelve-Hour Day. As a matter of arithmetic Twelve-Hour Day workers, even if the jobs were as leisurely as Mr. Gary says they are, have absolutely no time for family, for town, for church, or for self-schooling, for any of the activities that begin to make full citizenship; they have not the time, let alone the energy, even for recreation.

"At Johnstown a member of the Commission was approached by a man of middle age who said that he was determined never to go back to work until the question of hours was settled. He gave as his reason the fact that his little daughter had died within the last few months; he said he had never known the child because he was at work whenever she was awake, or else she was asleep during the day time. He was determined that he would know the other children and for that reason felt that it was imperative that he should have the Eight-Hour Day.

"This man was an American getting good wages and embittered, not by outside agitators, but by the facts of his life as he found them."

### Starvation Wages Paid

The starvation wage goes hand in hand with the Twelve-Hour Day. One is dependent on the other. The Steel Barons pay the workers miserable wages so as to compel them to accept the two shift system. Thus the evils of the low wages paid to the workers are part and parcel of the Twelve-Hour Day and can properly be charged to it. For the steel worker the longer day means lower pay. He will never realize the shorter day without at the same time winning higher pay.

According to the findings of the Interchurch Movement based on the official conclusion of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "The annual earnings of 72 percent of all workers were, and had been for years, below the level set by Government experts as the MINIMUM OF COMFORT level for families of five.

"The annual earnings of over one-third of all productive iron and steel workers were, and had been for years below the level set by Government experts as the MINIMUM OF SUBSISTENCE standard for families of five.



"This second standard being the lowest which scientists are willing to term an 'American standard of living,' it follows that nearly three quarters of the steel workers could not earn enough for an American standard of living.

"The bulk of unskilled labor earned less than enough for the average family's minimum subsistence; the bulk of semi-skilled labor earned less than enough for the average family's minimum comfort." . . .

The minimum of subsistence level is the lowest level for mere animal well-being with little or no attention to the comforts or social demands of human beings. The minimum of comfort level allows for a "modest amount of recreation."

This Commission also found that:

"A comparison of common labor earnings in steel with common labor earnings in five other major industries in the Pittsburgh district for the latter part of 1919 on the basis of a common standard week showed steel labor the lowest of the six."

It is under such long hours and low pay—the Twelve-Hour Hell Shift System—that the powerful Trust magnates would have us believe the steel workers can have any but wretched living conditions and miserable family and social life.

### Shocking Housing Conditions

This degradation of the steel workers was brought home to the Senate when it investigated the Steel Strike of 1919.

"Senator Sterling: Now, about the housing conditions, will you describe those?

"Father Kazinski: Well, two rooms as a rule, are the headquarters of the workers. The lower part is a kitchen and upstairs is the living room, if you can call it such, and the sleeping room for the family, and they have to sleep there. Sometimes they have boarders and sometimes there are four or five sleeping in a room.

"Senator Sterling: As a matter of fact, do many of them have less than four rooms?

"Father Kazinski: Yes; most of them have only two rooms."

And the Interchurch Report goes on to say:

"A dozen years ago the Pittsburgh Survey revealed conditions of housing which shocked public opinion and which Pittsburgh authorities state, have been improved practically not at all since then. It was impossible to conduct another such exhaustive housing survey in this investigation but sufficient observation was made to bear out the local statement, that housing was as bad as ever. . . The census takers found in Braddock, for example, that in this steel suburb of Pittsburgh 200 families were living in 61 houses; 35 boarders were in one house

where three different persons occupied each bed in the twenty four hours of each day, sleeping in eight hour shifts."

Senator Kenyon, Chairman of the Committee, speaking of Braddock, said:

"This is the worst place I have ever seen and I have watched housing conditions of many immigrants."

Finally, let us turn to the conditions in Gary itself to bring our horrible picture up to date. Said Elizabeth Hughes of the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor in Bulletin No. 112, published in 1923 as a "Field Study in Gary, Indiana":

"A number of long, one story frame buildings, cheaply constructed and designed to bring in a maximum in rental, which were built on the South Side, perhaps epitomize the worst ills of uncontrolled housing. They were planned for lodging houses, and divided into two rooms, or more ready three room apartments. These small apartments were occupied by families, however, with consequent overcrowding. When two such long buildings occupy adjoining 'shoe-string' lots with only a narrow passage between, used common by the tenants in both buildings, the congestion is great and but little relief is afforded by the small yards at the end of each lot. Two adjoining houses of this type supplied but a single water faucet and four privies for the use of twelve families. In another instance a single flush toilet was provided to accommodate nine families. Inadequate at all times, during cold weather it was rendered useless, due to its location at the end of the last apartment where it was not protected against freezing."

### Terrible Suffering of Mothers

What these working and living conditions of the steel workers spell for the mothers is thus portrayed by investigator Elizabeth Hughes in a study of the conditions in Gary for the Children's Bureau:

"All conditions of family and individual life are likely to be less favorable when the income is low; housing inferior, ignorance of sanitation and hygiene greater, and power to satisfy physical wants reduced."

Miss Hughes did not sugar-coat her findings. She showed that:

1. "Mothers employed during pregnancy—29.4 percent of the total births."

2. "The mothers of 279 infants (68 percent of the total whose mothers were gainfully employed) did not cease work even within two weeks of confinement, and the mothers of 216 infants confined followed gainful work up to the very day or hour of confinement."

3. "Seven-tenths of the mothers had no prenatal care whatever."

4. "A minimum of ten days rest in bed after a normal delivery is commonly recommended by obstetricians and resumption of house-



hold duties is discouraged under a fortnight. Seven hundred and forty-six mothers (54 percent) remained in bed less than ten days after delivery."

5. "More than three-fifths (65 per cent) of the mothers in families in which the chief breadwinners earned less than \$1,050 a year observed less than the 10 day period in bed after delivery and about one-half (51 per cent) had household help less than two weeks. When the income was \$1,850 or over, 36 per cent got up before the tenth day and only about one mother in six (16 per cent) had household help less than a fortnight."

6. "The proportion of families in which the chief breadwinner's earnings were not supplemented varied according to the amount of the breadwinner's contribution. When his earnings were below \$1,050, 56 per cent of the babies were found in families which had no supplementary earnings; in the next higher income group, 67 per cent; in the highest 72 per cent. In short, the more adequate the chief breadwinner's earnings, the smaller the tendency, the less need to add to them by the earnings of other members of the family. Mothers were less likely to be gainfully employed if the chief breadwinner's earnings were high, though even in the highest group 29 per cent of the mothers were employed. In the lowest income group the percentage was 41."

#### The Summary of This Horror

The Twelve-Hour Hell Shift System denies the steel worker even the slightest opportunity for family and social life. The Twelve-Hour Day and its destructive twin brother, low wages, are responsible for the wretched housing conditions, intolerable living conditions of the mothers and an appalling infant mortality.

Applying the rules of arithmetic to the everyday life of the steel workers, the Twelve-Hour Day annually adds hundreds of millions of dollars to the capitalists, subtracts years of life from the children and wives of the workingmen, divides the laborer's time until it is reduced to an insignificant fraction of a day for social and family life, and multiplies the workers' woes and troubles by the score.

### CHAPTER III.

#### SHORTAGE OF STEEL LABOR IS GARY FAKE

With blaring bands the Barons of the Satrapy of Steel have advertised the so-called "labor shortage" far and wide to thwart the growing opposition to the 12-Hour Hell Shift System.

Said the May 25, 1923, Report of Gary's American Iron and Steel Institute:

"But it would be impossible, under existing conditions, to obtain a sufficient number of men to operate the plants on a three-shift basis up to a capacity which would supply the present necessities of the purchasing public. There are not now, under a two-shift practice at the furnaces, enough men to meet the demand for iron and steel."

Here we have the fraudulent game of the Steel Trust in a nutshell. When there is depression, there is a shortage of money, and the poor Steel magnates can't afford to pay for the 8-Hour Day. When there is prosperity, big profits, then there is a shortage of labor, and the 8-Hour Day is again impossible.

#### Analyzing So-called Labor Shortage

The existence of a great number of unemployed, constituting an industrial reserve army, is an inherent feature of the capitalist system of production and exchange.

Even in the best times, in the heydays of prosperity, there are hundreds of thousands of men able and anxious to work but unable to do so, because the owners of the mills and mines and factories will not give them a chance to. Today, with the Great Depression of 1921 over, the army of the unemployed is far smaller than the six millions out of work eighteen months ago.

For instance, the last Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor, Davis, showed that in 240 cities of a combined population of 35,430,910 there were 2,301,588 unemployed wage earners. Mr. Davis admitted that his estimate of the number of unemployed was very incomplete and that the number out of work in the whole country, was much greater. Since then, at least 250,000 were added to the total number of employable workers through immigration.

Thus even the most sanguine capitalist optimist cannot reasonably contend that all of the millions of workers, still unemployed on June 30, 1922, have been absorbed in the recent industrial revival.

The huge standing industrial reserve army has not been reduced as much as the employing class would have us believe. An analysis of the figures presented by the Illinois Department of Labor in its Employment Bulletin of April, 1923, shows that on the average, for the period January-April, 1923, inclusive, there were 104.47 persons registered as applicants for every hundred jobs open in common labor. Furthermore, the New York State Industrial Commissioner in his Report, ending May, 1923, showed that factory employment is only 15 per cent higher than it was a year ago.

Besides, whatever "labor-shortage" there may have existed for a few months, is now steadily disappearing. The same New York Report, speaking of the extent of employment, points out that "decreases were reported in nearly two-thirds of the manufacturing industries of



the State, most of the increases were very slight, or were due to seasonal influences."

Commenting on this Report the New York Times of June 15, 1923, said: "Unless the signs of the times are misleading, the industries of the country as a whole will not long be suffering from a labor-shortage." It is especially enlightening to note that, according to a report of June 2d on the steel industry in the Pittsburgh District, the only important existing shortage of help is manifested in the need of skilled hands, engaged in the cutting and threading departments of the pipe and wire lines. A New York Times Pittsburgh dispatch, discussing this condition, said on June 3, 1923: "In most cases there is ample supply of help."

#### Shameful Record of Steel Trust

For the sake of argument let us, for a moment, accept the statement of the American Iron and Steel Institute that the introduction of the 8-Hour Day would entail the employment of an additional 60,000 men. Here the Steel Corporation must answer this question: Why did it resist with assault and battery the demands of thousands of steel workers for an 8-Hour Day during the Great Strike of 1919 when it could easily have had an additional working force of thrice that number? And why was Golden-Rule Gary silent about the 8-Hour Day a little over a year ago when 6,000,000 workers were walking the streets out of work and out of hope?

However, when there was a terrific overflow in the labor market Gary did not stop at silence. In the period of 1920-1921 when the Steel Trust could, without any difficulty whatsoever, have introduced the 8-Hour Day, it discharged 67,000 men, and continued the ten, twelve, and fourteen hour shifts. In 1920 the average number employed by the U. S. Steel Corporation was 200,991. In 1921 the average was 133,663.

#### Degrading Conditions Drive Workers from Steel Mills

Testifying before the Senate Committee, in 1919, the Steel magnates admitted that one of the reasons why their industry faced a labor-shortage was, "because you can't get Americans to work the 12-Hour Day."

Then the wages. The starvation wages paid by the Steel Trust drive the workers away even further from the mills. Comparing steel wages with those prevailing for common labor in other industries, the New York Journal of Commerce said: "Even ditch diggers of the railways are receiving 41 cents per hour." The average wage paid today to common labor is 55 cents an hour—or 15 cents per hour more than that paid to the steel worker. And yet Gary and his crew who

receive yearly millions of dollars in dividends are condemning the workers for refusing to run after a forty-cents-an-hour job in the infernal steel mills.

According to the April, 1923, Employment Bulletin of the Illinois Department of Labor the average weekly wage in the iron and steel industry during April was \$27.61. A magnificent sum for a family to live on! Nor should anyone be stunned with terrific amazement at the menacing height to which the steel wage has climbed! This average wage includes the salaries paid skilled and responsible men as well as leaders and common labor.

#### The Eight-Hour Day Plants Have Plenty of Workers

Again, not even Gary and his Committee, so highly gifted with inventive genius, can find a shred of evidence to disprove the fact that not a single steel plant working on a three-shift plan is experiencing the least bit of labor-shortage. We need but cite the experiences of the Republic Iron and Steel Co., the International Harvester Co., the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co., and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co.

From a letter sent by J. F. Welborn, President of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., to the Federal Council of Churches we learn that:

"A factor of added interest is the fact that with almost capacity operations at our steel plants during the last few months and employing over 6,000 men, we have experienced no shortage of labor. Our operating officials have frequently expressed the belief that this condition is due, in large part at least, to adoption of the eight-hour shift."

It is a fact and an incontrovertible fact that it is only on the basis of 40 cents an hour and Twelve Hours a day that the Steel Trust is at all confronted with a labor shortage.

Finally, let us turn to the Report of the Federated American Engineering Societies on this question. Said the engineers in their Report entitled "The Twelve Hour Shift in Industry":

"The plants which have adopted the three-shift system and are paying wages a little lower than are paid at corresponding plants working twelve-hour shifts have sufficient labor, both skilled and unskilled."

#### Rip Veil off Gary's Committee

And in his letter to the Federal Council of Churches, Pres. J. F. Welborn stated that:

"The trend of production per man hour, with unimportant exceptions, has been upward since the adoption of the Eight-Hour Day; and in every department of our steel manufacturing operations, from the blast furnace to the wire mill, our production per man hour is now greater than it was when all of these activities were operating on the twelve hour shift."



It is plain that Gary's assertion that the Eight-Hour Shift would entail the employment of 60,000 additional workers won't hold water. The increased efficiency and production brought on by the Eight-Hour Work Day system cuts down considerably the estimated labor shortage of Gary's Committee.

Now turning to an abstract of an address delivered on December 3, 1923, by Prof. Horace B. Drury, formerly of the Economics Department of the Ohio State University, before a joint meeting of the Taylor Society, the Metropolitan and Management Sections of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the New York Section of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers we find that:

"By taking care, some manufacturers going on Eight Hours have been able to reduce the force of men 10 per cent; some more. Others have found that their rolling-mill output has gone up well toward 20 per cent or even more."

And in answer to Gary's latest lunge into excuses for continuing the Twelve-Hour Day, Dr. Mortimer E. Cooley, President of the American Federated Engineering Societies, said:

"In practically every major continuous industry, there are plants which have increased the quantity of production per man as much as 25 per cent. In a few exceptional cases the increase has been much larger. Evidence shows also an improvement in quality of production following the reduction in the length of shifts."

#### Summary

In times of depression the steel barons oppose the Eight-Hour Day because there is a shortage of money. In times of prosperity, times of big profits, the Eight-Hour Day is opposed on the ground of a shortage of labor.

Investigation shows that it is the Twelve-Hour Day which is responsible for the slightest shortage of labor ever experienced by the steel industry and disproves completely the contention of Gary that the labor shortage is the cause of the continuation of the Twelve-Hour Day.

The whole history of the Steel Trust coupled with the findings of the engineers as to increased efficiency in production on the Eight-Hour basis shows that the main reason for the Steel Trust's insistence on the perpetuation of the Two-Shift System is this: The steel barons want to keep the workers in abject slavery.

They want to deny the workers every possible moment affording an opportunity for resting or thinking. They want to make impossible any condition which might, even in the most indirect and remote way, make possible a revolt of the steel workers. To insure their keeping the workers completely enslaved, the steel masters have chosen the Twelve-Hour Working Day as the best means.

## CHAPTER IV.

### HUGE PROFITS OF STEEL TRUST PROVE IT CAN EASILY AFFORD TO ABOLISH THE 12-HOUR DAY

Andrew Carnegie once said: "There are more ways of figuring cost than there are of killing a cat. It is simply a matter of book-keeping." Apparently this was the principle by which the American Iron and Steel Institute was guided when it reported that the abolition of the 12-Hour Shift "would increase the cost of production on the average about 15 per cent."

Unbiased authoritative investigators have proven, and proven beyond a doubt, that the Steel Masters' contention as to the 8-Hour-Day entailing an increase of 15 per cent in the cost of production is simply another case of the Steel Trust stretching the truth to death.

#### Experts Show That Two-Shift System Is More Economical

In the investigation of the Federated American Engineering Society on the "12-Hour Shift in Industry" we find overwhelming proof to shatter the case of King Steel against the 8-Hour Day. Says this report:

"Robert A. Bull, in a paper before the American Foundrymen's Association, published the results of a change from two shifts on the open-hearth furnaces of the Commonwealth Steel Co., 'which,' he says, 'indicates fully a more economical and efficient manipulation of both open-hearth and boiler furnaces. Major Bull is an acknowledged expert and authority on open-hearth steel manufacture; twice President of the American Foundrymen's Association. He has been instrumental in changing other open-hearth plants from two to three shifts, even in the centre of America's competitive steel industry, the Pittsburgh District. He is still of the opinion that the savings in cost of operation, quality of product and uniformity of operation and output, fully compensate for the expense of working the 'continuous operation' laborers on three shifts instead of two shifts."

Enumerating the advantages of the 8-Hour Day which more than compensate for whatever apparent increase there might be in the cost of production the Engineers go on to say:

"As a matter of actual experience, it is known that some plants, or departments of plants, have changed from the 12-Hour to the 8-Hour shift and reduced their labor costs. Others are operating on the 8-Hour shift with satisfaction to their management and stockholders. Others have changed and reduced their total manufacturing cost."



### Steel Trust Can Well Afford the Three-Shift Working-Day

But even if the 8-Hour Day were not more efficient and more productive and thus more economical, the Steel Trust could then very well afford any increased cost that a shorter working-day might entail.

The Steel-Trust is perhaps the biggest employer in the world. It operates 144 works, 24 blast furnaces, and 327 open hearth furnaces. The U. S. Steel Corporation is the richest concern in America. It heads the list of the country's 29 largest companies with \$318,633,205 in cash and investment securities. Its natural working capital is \$536,271,248.

The Steel Trust owns outright 30 railroads operating a mileage of 3,759 miles or enough to span the continent. These railways own 61,319 freight cars and 172 passenger cars. But the Steel Empire sways a far greater dominion over the adherents of American industry. Amongst the 25 men who control 82 per cent, or 211,280 miles of the country's steam railways, the owners of steel stock are pre-eminent. For instance, Mr. George F. Baker, a member of the Finance Committee and of the Board of Directors of the U. S. Steel Corporation is one of the leaders of these 25 "chosen people" of the God Mammon.

Gary and Co., also own a fleet of 35 steamers engaged in overseas trade, 76 in Great Lakes trade, and 269 steel barges. Besides, through J. P. Morgan and Co., American Steel magnates dominate a large number of American and even British shipping concerns.

But the Barons of Steel are not content with holding sway over the land and the sea. They also own 75 percent of America's bituminous coal fields. Some of these properties are: 415,587 acres of coking coal; 337,733 acres of steam and gas coal; 302,481 acres of surface. The U. S. Steel Corporation further owns outright 20,236 bee-hive coke-ovens, 2,992 by-products ovens, and 193,818 acres of gas and oil territory.

This is the mighty Empire of Steel, the most gigantic scab industry in the world, that has been reared on the brutalizing 12-Hour Day, starvation wages, infamous working conditions and wretched living conditions.

The history of the U. S. Steel Corporation is a history of fabulous profits becoming ever more fabulous. In 1901 it was organized with \$400,000,000 of tangible property covered by bonds and other paper, and about \$1,000,000 of watered stock, common and preferred.

In the ten year period, 1912-1921, its aggregate net profits available for dividends were \$1,097,177,135. In the last 10 years the Steel Trust has stored up a surplus of \$500,000,000, has cut down its bonded debt by \$103,000,000 and has spent \$685,000,000 on construction and acquisitions. All of this expansion came from the profits created by the workers.

For the period 1913-1919 alone the Steel Corporation piled up a total undivided surplus of \$2,239,986,569.84. In the years 1917-1922, its average margin of safety, that is, the proportion of available surplus or net revenue left over after fixed charges have been provided for, was almost 73 per cent. During this period it earned on preferred stock an average of 23.89 per cent and on common an average of 15.51 per cent. On Dec. 31, 1921, the Steel Corporation was christened the giant of super-trusts with a property account of \$1,631,579,260. Though there was some depression during this year, the gross sales and earnings of the company reached the huge sum of \$1,092,697,772.

This pace of growth is being excelled in 1923. In the first six months of the year the Steel Corporation has piled up a net profit close to \$85,000,000! And production is breaking all previous records.

To this heart-breaking poverty of the Steel Trust add the petty sum of \$75,000,000 annually taken by it from the farmers thru the vicious Pittsburgh Plus system.

### Steel Trust Heavily Subsidized by The Government

Yet, let us go even further than we have gone—hypothetically, at least, since it is impossible to do so arithmetically. Suppose that the Steel Trust is still too poor to pay the assumed increase in the cost of production. Then, let us turn to another corner and find another source of fabulous income flowing into the bottomless coffers of the Steel Trust's deposit vault.

Pursuing its policy of subsidizing the powerful bankers and manufacturers, the United States Government, through the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act, is donating to the makers of heavy steel products outright gifts running into hundreds of millions of dollars. Analyzing these huge bonuses granted to the Steel Magnates, the latest Report of the Fair Tariff League shows that:

"The duties given in the Fordney law embargoes importations. They carelessly offer to the makers of heavy steel products, pig iron, cast and wrought iron pipe, structural iron, tinplate and ternaplate, bar steel, steel rails, wire and wire work, \$351,000,000, which sum will be doubled to consumers, making about \$702,000,000 to be paid partly in the direct cost of highly finished products like automobiles and machinery, and the balance in amortization charges. . . .

"To the above \$720,000,000 of protection on heavy steel products would be added a possible \$1,580,000,000 on only 21 of the many highly finished steel products upon which the government would collect only \$5,603,907 or \$1 against \$282 it made the public liable for."

### Conclusions

Under all of these circumstances analyzed it is obvious even to



the most dim-sighted that the assertion of Gary and his Committee that the Steel Trust cannot afford to pay for an 8-Hour Day is as fraudulent as the contention that a labor-shortage precludes the possibility of inaugurating the Three Shift system.

First of all, an 8-Hour Day will not increase the cost of production by 15 per cent.

Secondly, the Steel Trust can very well afford to pay a much larger increase, if it were necessary.

Thirdly, the gigantic Government subsidy granted the Steel Trust entirely disposes of its ridiculous cry of poverty.

## CHAPTER V.

### STEEL WORKERS ANXIOUS TO ABOLISH THE TWELVE-HOUR WORKING DAY

Of all the unfounded arguments raised by the Steel Trust against the abolition of the 12-Hour Day, the point that the workers themselves do not ask for or want shorter hours is the most absurd.

Opening its Report on the Total Elimination of the 12-Hour Day, the American Iron and Steel Committee said:

"Apparently the underlying reason for the agitation which resulted in the appointment of this committee was based on a sentiment (not created or endorsed by the workmen themselves) that the 12-Hour Day was an unreasonable hardship upon the employees who were connected with it. The Workmen, as a rule, prefer longer hours because it permits larger compensation per day."

#### An Old Game

This is an old game that the Steel Trust is playing. The same fraud was resorted to by the English manufacturers when the workers were struggling for the 10-Hour Day. The forefathers of the Steel Barons brought forward loads of affidavits secured through fraud and duress, purporting to show that the workers were opposed to fewer hours.

The pith of this method is the following. First, the Steel Masters force such low pay on the workers as to compel them to labor unbearable hours in order to eke out a starvation wage. Then, they blame the workers for the continuation of the system of long hours because they dread being pushed still further below the line of least subsistence.

Little effort is needed to destroy Gary's reputation as a friend of the workingmen. Appearing before the Senate Committee in 1919 the

Corporation's subsidiary presidents handed out the same line of misrepresentation of the workers' desires. Some of these presidents even assured the Interchurch Commission that in a few plants where the 8-Hour Day was introduced the plants lost their men "because the foreigner wants to work the twelve-hour day, he wants to make as much money as he possibly can."

While such ridiculous propaganda was being spread far and wide, 365,000 workers in 50 cities in 10 States deserted the mills in their Great Strike for the 8-Hour Day, better working conditions, and the right to organize. This is how anxious the workers were to continue on the 12-Hour basis. What is more, Gary himself, testifying before the Senate Committee, confessed that "if we should immediately limit hours to eight and pay for the eight hours the same the men are now getting for 10 or 12 hours, every employe would favor it."

In plain English this means that the workers are anxious for the abolition of the Two-Shift System, but fear to be driven into further degradation and misery.

#### Lieutenant Walker's Findings

Interesting evidence on the reactions of the workers to the 12-Hour Day is presented by Lieutenant Walker in his diary:

"On the first night-shifts I wondered if my feelings on the arrangements of hours were not solely those of a sensitive novice. I'd get used to it perhaps. But I found that first helpers, melters, foremen, 'old timers,' and 'Company men' were for the most part against the long day. They were all looking forward, with varying degrees of hope, to the time when the daily toll of hours would be reduced."

#### Workers for Shorter Day

After its investigation the Senate Committee concluded that the majority of the steel workers were opposed to the 12-Hour Day. The investigations of the Interchurch Movement supported this conclusion. We cite the following from the diary of a Gary worker made in August 1919 as presented by this Commission.

"An engineer many years on the job says: 'Count me in for a six day week, too, like a civilized man. This fourteen hours a night, seven days a week, is hell.'"

"The gang boss says: 'Who the devil is this man Gary to tell our representative to go to hell. Somebody's going to get him for that.'"

"Another says: 'Gary thinks we worked his old twelve and fourteen hours so long, we'll stand for anything.'"

How strongly the workers felt on this question is seen from the following testimony of a gray-haired stationary engineer obtained by the Interchurch Commission on October 25, 1919, during the strike, in Young-



stown, Ohio. The declaration is especially interesting in view of the fact that it is made by a skilled man.

"I had relatives in the Revolutionary War, I fought for freedom of the Philippines myself, and I had three boys fighting for democracy in France. One of them is lying in the Argonne forest now. If my boy could give his life fighting for free democracy in Europe, I guess I can stand it to fight this battle thru to the end. I am going to help my fellow workmen show Judge Gary that he can't act as if he was a king or kaizer and tell them how long they have got to work."

The workers are onto the infamous game of the Steel Trust's savage exploitation. They know that the capitalists are simply out to strip them to the skeleton. Turning to Lieutenant Walker's diary, we find the following on this point: "The melter broke in again. It's the dollar they are after—the sucking dollar. They say they are going to cut the long turn. I heard they were going to cut out the long turn when I went to work in the mill, as a kid. I'm workin' it, ain't I? Christ!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### TWELVE-HOUR DAY RESTS ON BRUTAL DICTATORSHIP OF EMPLOYING CLASS

#### Steel is All-Powerful Today

The Twelve-Hour Day is maintained by a highly organized system of force and violence—the employing class Government, municipal, State, and Federal. Every steel town and almost every official, church and newspaper in these towns are the outright property of the Steel Buccaneers. Only thru Black Cossackism and merciless oppression are the workers held in the abject slavery of the inhuman 12-Hour Day. From their own bitter experiences thousands of steel workers have come to believe that Government is their bosses' rule of blood and iron. A mailed fist policy goes hand in hand with the long working day. Bayonets buttress the powerful dictatorship of steel and profits. A vicious spy system has its deadly tentacles creeping thru every walk of the steel worker's life.

The union of Steel and Government is today an open, ugly fact. The Democratic President Wilson had Gary act as the representative of the public at his first Industrial Peace Conference. The Republican Harding only echoes the sentiments and opinions of this Field Marshal of the American employing class.

Mellon, our Secretary of the Treasury, a heavy donor to the Re-

publican funds, is a steel owner and is the Steel Trust's agent plenipotentiary in the Cabinet. Steel is all-powerful and makes and unmakes the laws. Speaking of the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act which gave the steel Trust a total bonus of over two billion dollars, Senator Underwood said: "I know this iron and steel schedule and I know that it is a fraud and a shame upon the people of this country."

### Government is Responsible for Continuation of 12-Hour Day

Considering the why and wherefore of the persistence of the 12-Hour Day and the Seven-Day Week, the Interchurch World investigators found that: "The Government as much as the steel Corporation is to blame." The same authorities reported that one of the chief causes for the loss of the 1919 strike was the support accorded the Steel Magnates "by Governmental agencies and by public opinion." In this sense it is easy to understand that in the strike "the foundations of the United States Government were involved."

But perhaps the most imposing evidence of the relationship between the Steel Trust and the Government is to be found in the fact that the Chairman of the Senate Committee investigating the Steel Strike boasted to Mr. Gary that he himself was in favor of the Open shop. The caes is tersely put in the following taken from the Inter-

"In the twenty-eight pages of the Senate Committee's Report on the Steel Strike much space is devoted to the need for Americanization. Only a few lines were devoted to the 12-Hour Day."

And this Americanization has meant to the Steel workers only gruesome suffering and unrestrained terrorism!

### Local Government Tyranny Rampant in Steel Area

As soon as the steel workers went into the struggle against the 12-Hour Day the Government—Municipal, State, and National—leaped to the defense of the employers. Describing this situation confronting the strikers the Interchurch investigators reported that:

"Local magistrates, police authorities, etc., around Pittsburgh were frequently steel mill officials. In other cases steel mill officials exercised police authority without the excuse of having been previously elected to public office. For example, besides Sheriff Haddock of Alleghany County whose brother was superintendent of an American Sheet and Tin Plate plant (Corporation subsidiary), Mayor Crawford of Duquesne was the brother of the President of the McKeesport Tin Plate Co.; President Moon of the Borough of Homestead was chief of the mechanical department of the Homestead Mills; Burgess Lincoln of Munhal was a department superintendent in the same mill. The Burgess of Clairton was a mill official, etc., etc....



The terrible odds overwhelming the workers in their fight against the Two-Shift System is thus brought home forcefully in the following from the answer of the Strike Committee to Wilson's request for a postponement of the strike.

"As one of many examples: In the city of McKeesport a meeting held by the men within their constitutional rights was broken up and men arrested and thrown into jail, charged with riot, and held to the excessive bail of \$5,000 each, while one of the hirelings of the steel industry, arrested for the murder of a woman speaker at Brackenridge, Pa., is being held under bail of about \$2,500. Another patent example is Hammond, Indiana, where four defenseless union men were charged upon and killed by hired detectives of the steel industry, and witnesses on behalf of their survivors have been so intimidated and maltreated that the truth of the killing was suppressed.

"Guns and cannon have been planted in mills, and highly charged electric wires have been strung around their premises.

"Armed men in large numbers are going about intimidating not only the workers but, in many communities, anyone showing the slightest sympathy with the men."

### White Terror in Pennsylvania

Typical of the inestimable aid given by the Government to the Steel Trust is the following conditions portrayed by the Senate Committee:

"In the Pittsburgh district, however, meetings have been prohibited from the time the campaign for organization started. In McKeesport and Duquesne, several months before the strike was called, the organizers were forbidden to hold meetings of any sort in halls within the city or on vacant lots anywhere in the vicinity. Appeal was made without avail to the Mayor of the city and the Governor of Pennsylvania. In Clairton meetings were held on Sundays for several weeks prior to the strike, but on September 21 the sheriff proclaimed that 'there should not be any meetings of any kind anywhere.'"

The whole situation on this section of the Strike Army's front is thus summed up by the Interchurch Report:

"Free elections were customarily impossible in steel towns in Western Pennsylvania due to clearly understood manipulations by the steel company officials who were public officials.

"That is, democratic practices as well as constitutional rights are decisively modified by the Steel Companies in Western Pennsylvania, and the 'modifications' are for the purpose of defeating labor organizations. . . . During the strike violations of personal rights and personal liberty were wholesale; men were arrested without warrants, imprisoned without charges, their homes invaded without legal process,

magistrates' verdicts were rendered frankly on the basis of whether the striker would go back to work or not."

### Military Rule in Indiana

In Indiana the conditions were not different from those in Pennsylvania, as can be seen from the following despatch appearing in the New York Times of October 16, 1919:

"The first outdoor meeting of the strikers since the arrival of the troops in Gary was held this afternoon by permission of Colonel Mapes, who sat on the speakers' platform during the meeting. Secret service men were in the crowd of nearly 3,000 strikers, and soldiers were stationed on the outskirts. Near the park machine guns were held in readiness."

On the developments in this area the Interchurch Report said:

"General Wood declared that 'the army would be neutral.' He established rules in regard to picketing. These rules were so interpreted and carried out as to result in breaking up the picket-line. One picket, for example, would be permitted at a certain spot; if the striker who came up to relieve the picket, stopped to converse with him and to receive reports and instructions, both strikers would be arrested. Delays and difficulties would attend the release of these men from jail or 'bull pen.' The picket line thus dwindled and its disappearance signalled to the Gary workers that the strike was breaking. Army officers sent soldiers to arrest union officers in other trades, for example, for threatening to call a strike on a local building operation. Workers throughout the city believed that the Federal Government opposed them and that the regulars would stay as long as the steel workers remained on strike. The army was not withdrawn until the strike was declared off."

### Interlocking System of Company Spies and Federal Agents

In many instances the spies of the Steel Trust are the same ones who are agents of the Department of Justice. In other instances they work hand in glove in keeping the workers chained to the 12-Hour Day. Apropos of this interlocking system of slave-driving, the Interchurch investigators showed that:

"In McKeesport in one raid 79 workmen were taken, three were detained and one on final examination was held by the Federal authorities. Federal officers testified that the denunciations which had led to these arrests were made by plant detectives or 'under-cover-men' of the steel companies, many of them sworn in as Sheriff's deputies during the strike. In the Pittsburgh district raids and arrests for



Bolshevism were made on the sole complaint of company 'under-cover-men.' . . .

"These company spy-systems carry right through the United States Government . . . Federal immigration authorities testified to the Commission that raids and arrests for 'radicalism,' etc., were made, especially in the Pittsburgh district, on the denunciation and secret reports of the steel company's 'under-cover-men,' and the prisoners turned over to the Department of Justice. The Monessen 'labor file' enabled the student to follow one such paper through to the Government. . .

"The testimony of a Federal officer of long official experience, made at a hearing of the Commission of Inquiry in November in Pittsburgh was: 90 per cent of all the radicals arrested and taken into custody were reported by one of the large corporations, either of the steel or coal industry. The corporation orders an organization raided by the police department, the members are taken into custody, thrown into the police station, and the Department of Justice is notified. They send a man to examine them to see if there are any extreme radicals or anarchists among them."

### Conclusion

When the strike deputations of workers sought aid from Attorney General Palmer his only answer was a commendation of a "patriotic" society's effort to run labor "agitators" out of Pennsylvania. Thus wrote the Attorney General in November 26, 1919: "It is a pity that more patriotic organizations do not take action similar to that of your order."

According to the Interchurch Commission the attitude of the Government towards the struggle of the workers against the 12-Hour Day could be summed up in these words: "Civil peace could be preserved only by interference with the existence of ordinary civil liberties on the part of a large proportion of the population."

No worker should or can take seriously Harding's last plea in behalf of the abolition of the 12-Hour Day. The very reply of Gary accepting the President's plan to institute the 8-Hour Day "when there is a surplus of labor available" unmasks the joint hypocrisy and fraud of the promises of the Chief Executive of the country and the Chief Executive of the Steel Trust. On this basis, the President has actually not gone one bit further than the Iron and Steel Institute. Harding has only lightened his burden of apologies for the coming campaign and saved the Republican Party the Steel campaign contributions.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MINERS AND RAILROADERS MUST HELP ORGANIZE STEEL MILLS AND WIPE OUT THE 12-HOUR DAY

But, much as the strength of the Steel Trust and the help given it by the Government may be responsible for the degrading conditions, low pay and inhuman working hours in the industry, most of the blame for the intolerable situation must be placed on the heads of the labor bureaucracy. One need but examine the outstanding evils of the Steel Industry to be convinced that here more than in any other American industry is there a pressing demand for organization. Yet the record of inactivity in unionizing the steel workers is about as black as any achieved by our reactionary labor leaders.

#### Gompers and the 1919 Steel Strike

Speaking of the Great Strike the Interchurch Commission said: "Causes of defeat, second in importance only to the fight waged by the Steel Corporation, lay in the organization and leadership, not so much of the strike itself, as of the American labor movement."

Gompers did not address a single meeting of steel workers during the strike. He did not attend a single meeting of the National Committee meeting in Pittsburgh. The case of Gompers attending meetings of the National Committee for organizing the steel workers was a case of the mountain really coming to Mahomet because Mahomet would not come to the mountain. The only meetings of the National Committee that Gompers attended were those held in Washington. The National Committee had to move its meetings to Gompers, to the city where he was, from Pittsburgh, in order to have him attend.

Just at this time, while things were coming to a showdown, the President of the American Federation of Labor saw fit to take a junket trip to Mexico. The organization drive of the National Committee made it too hot for him in the United States at that time. Gompers spent a month on this trip to monkey around with the Conference of the still-born Pan-American Federation of Labor.

While the workers were straining every ounce of energy to organize for a fight against the 12-Hour Day, Sam Gompers took a flying trip to Europe and helped frame that damnable Versailles Treaty which has enslaved hundreds of thousands of workers and made millions the pawns of the imperialists. Six months were spent by the "Grand Old



Man" of the American labor movement in the gay life of Paris. All this time the steel workers back home were looking forward to help from their leaders in the struggle against the unutterable conditions.

As a matter of fact Gompers did not find it safe enough to indorse the strike until 400,000 were out in an open battle against the Steel Trust. What is even worse, once the strike preparations were in full swing and the workers were all keyed up for a battle royal, Gompers publicly compromised the whole strike by coming out for Wilson's plan to postpone action until after his Industrial Peace Conference. At this time over 30,000 workers had already been discharged for union activities.

Though the enemy confronting the steel workers was the strongest one ever faced by striking workers, and though the Governmental forces at the disposal of the Steel Trust were unlimited, yet Gompers gave only a dozen organizers to the National Organization campaign and strike. The financial support tendered the strikers was totally insufficient. Discussing this phase of the Great Steel Strike, William Z. Foster, the noted leader, of the 1919 struggle pointed out that:

"Probably no big modern trade union organizing campaign and strike was conducted on such slender means...

"Often the National Committee had to beg for weeks to have a man sent in to organize a local union, the members for which it had already enrolled. Hundreds of local unions suffered and many a one perished outright for want of attention. Whole districts had to be neglected with serious consequences when the strike came."

And while the National Committee was calling together a delegate conference in order to enthuse the workers and throw them into the struggle for a test of strength, the reactionary leader M. F. Tighe, a pal of Gompers and President of the Amalgamated Association, made an attempt to split the forces of the workers. In the face of this call of the National Committee Mr. Tighe addressed a letter to Gary requesting a separate Conference. Fortunately for the steel workers Gary turned down Tighe's offer and they were saved from this vile treachery.

### Threatens to Move An Inch

The recent report of the American Iron and Steel Institute proposing to continue the 12-Hour Day and the last exchange of vague meaningless promises between Gary and Harding on this subject for political purposes have raised a storm of public opinion against the Two-Shift system. Because of this avalanche of protest of church bodies, liberals, and members of even the most conservative of the population, Gompers has been forced to wake up. Gompers is now compelled to make hollow promises as to organizing the workers.

Gompers has announced that an organization campaign will very soon be launched amongst the steel workers. How half-hearted and faint an attempt this is to be and how unwillingly Gompers is getting into the campaign is borne out by two facts. First of all, Gompers is again putting only a handful of organizers at the disposal of this campaign. Such tactics are suicidal. At best they are stupid. In this case they are criminal. Secondly, in laying the plans for this campaign, whatever of it will materialize, Gompers is excluding the best fighters of the old strike. Masking his treachery to the interests of the steel workers under the hypocritical guise of an attack on "radicals," Gompers is depriving the unionization drive of the best forces available.

These are exactly the tactics pursued by all the enemies of labor. These are the very words used by the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers in their attacks on Labor. A pint jar cannot hold a quart. With an insufficient number of organizers and the best organizers kept out of the campaign Gompers can do very little for the steel workers.

### Our Conclusions

The only way the steel workers can hope to abolish the 12-Hour Day is through building a powerful union able to settle the score with the United States Steel Corporation and its allies. All workers, particularly the miners and railroaders, must aid in this effort to unionize the steel mills.

It is an irreparable disgrace to the whole American Labor Movement that the 12-Hour Day is still in force in the steel industry. Labor stands helpless, its leaders asleep at the switch and refusing to do anything, while forces outside the Labor Movement, like the Federal Council of Churches, are agitating for the 8-Hour Day.

The steel workers in particular and the other organized workers in general must bring to bear the greatest pressure possible on the officialdom of the American Federation of Labor to get into a unionization campaign heart and soul. Thus only can the 12-Hour Day be ended. No half-way measures will do in a fight with the Steel Trust. The workers must organize for a fight to the finish in order to free themselves from their present slave conditions.



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